L. F. Deland: Football's "Invention" Man

By DANIEL.

LORIN F. DELAND and the flying wedge! What a strange combination—what a stir they created just thirty years ago!—this chess master, who never had played football but became a successful coach at Harvard and this startling invention of his which opened a new era in the great game! Deland and the wedge! For the football devotee of another generation the name and the play bring back pleasant memories of the most singular coach in the history of the game and the most singular stratagem in that great sport of crowding stratagems.

For your old timer mention of Deland and his epoch making play means bridging the chasm of years and wandering back in memory to that historic meeting of Harvard and Yale at Hampden Park, in Springfield, Mass., on November 19, 1892. It was on that day of blue skies, at the halfway mark between New York and Boston, that the chess master's invention was flashed by Harvard against an astounded Yale eleven. Down the field the Crimson went crashing with the terrific momentum of this first of all momentum plays.

Down the field Harvard went smashing to glory for this strange coach who was not even a Harvard man—this remarkable mentor who had turned for the nonce from his chessboard and his work as a pioneer in modern advertising methods to test out his theories of football and attempt to lead the Crimson out of the football wilderness. Harvard did not win that day. It was defeated by 6 to 0, but this setback was regarded as a moral victory, for the Elis had gone on the field 3 to 1 favorites, with visions of 20 or 30 points

Romance of Old Football.

Deland and the wedge! For the younger generation they bring up that strangely opulent quality of romance which attaches to the old football days, the old football heroes, the old era of mass and momentum play which gave to football history names which never will die. You may sing of your Mahan and Coy and Casey and Strubing. Titans all! But for the sheer romance of football men like to hark back to the day when football was more of your man to man fight—your crashing struggle in which the ball was advanced in a wearing, tearing fight along the ground and not through the air.

Men like to talk of Butterworth, McCormick, Heffelfinger and Hinkey, of Lea and George and Edwards, of Waters, Lewis, Trenchard, Woodruff and Hare. These are names immortal—names which go back to that Homeric era of Deland and his flying wedge.

Deland and his invention left their stamp on the game with a positiveness and lasting brilliance which were not matched until Harvard got its Percy Haughton and his scheme of deceptive football. The basic principle of the flying wedge is in use even in this day of open football. The power which lies in many of our shifts, particularly the diagonal variety used by Notre Dame, comes from the principle demonstrated by Harvard's eleven on that fine field at Springfield just thirty years ago last Sunday.

The imprint which that game left on the memories of those who saw it with understanding of the new principle evolved is uneffaceable. We were discussing Deland, the wedge and that contest with Walter Camp, the father of American football, only the other day. "He was a most singular character, was Deland," said Mr. Camp. "I never will forget that game or the astonishment of the onlookers as they saw Harvard use the flying wedge at the start of the second half. It was a turning point in football—one of the brightest high lights in the history of this remarkable sport.

"Deland—he's dead now, poor fellow—was a remarkable man in many ways, a most likable character of a keenly analytical mind with a strong turn toward psychology. He never went to Harvard but he was a member of the St. Botolph's Club in Boston, where he met many Harvard men and had a chance to talk football. He wanted to know the reason for every move made on the field. And soon he began to get ideas and build up theories."

Mr. Camp sat back and began to chuckle.

"At first they showed a slight inclination to be patronizing toward Deland and his ideas," he continued. "The old football players and coaches joshed him—and then they began to stop joshing. Deland had discovered new possibilities in football, new strategy and new strategems. The others began to sit up and take notice.

The Deland Ideas Accepted.

"Those in control of football at Cambridge became so impressed with Deland's ideas that in 1892 they appointed him head coach. Harvard had been beaten by Yale in 1891 and the outlook was dark. At once he introduced many novelties in the way of attack. Harvard's opponents laughed and referred to these new stunts as 'Deland's checkerboard plays.' But Deland was making football history and introducing formations on which a new type of football was built. The flying wedge, of course, was his masterpiece.

"Descriptions of this play nearly always have been erroneous. It has been said that Deland divided his team into two squads of five men, leaving the man to touch the ball at the apex. As a matter of fact there were two men at the ball—one to put it into play and the other to protect him in case of fumble or any other mishap."

Mr. Camp took paper and pencil and began to diagram the first use of the flying wedge. "Here is how the Harvard team used the play in 1892," he went on. "As you probably know, in those days the rule about the kickoff was very elastic. It did not stipulate how many yards the ball had to be kicked, so it became the custom of the kicker to touch the leather with his foot and then pass it back to some other man who punted. There was some advantage in that maneuver then. At any rate, in that game at Springfield Yale won the toss at the start and kicked off, so Harvard had no chance to try the new trick then. Yale outplayed the Crimson in the first half but could not score. Just before time was called the Blue was on Harvard's 3-yard line, where C. D. Bliss fumbled. Emmons recovered for Harvard.

"At the start of the second half it was Harvard's turn to kick off. Yale's linemen were strung along the 55-yard line to meet Harvard's expected V trick, which, by the way, was invented at Princeton. But greatly to the surprise of everybody the Harvard men did not form the usual V to put the ball into play. Bernie Trafford, the Harvard quarterback and captain—a great drop kicker, that boy—took his place on Harvard's 45-yard line, midway between the side lines. Mackie of Harvard was near him.

"Five Harvard men fell back to one side of the field, four to the other. They were back of the 25 yard line. Aleck Moffat, the old Princeton player, and S. V. Coffin of Wesleyan, who were the officials, stood with their eyes popping out of their heads. They did not know what to expect. Trafford did not put the ball into play. He just waved his hand at the two sides behind him—and on they came!

Birth of Flying Wedge.

"They came smashing along with terrific force, gathering momentum as they ran, converging toward Trafford. It was the birth of the flying wedge. As soon as that wedge reached its apex—Trafford—he touched the ball into play and disappeared in the smashing mass which kept right on. Yale's men diagnosed the play remarkably well and finally stopped the wedge—but not until Harvard had reached the Yale 25 yard line.

"It was a great play, but Harvard was not strong enough to make the most of it that day. Yale came back and began to march toward the Crimson's goal line. Lorry Bliss's runs around the Harvard ends and Frank Butterworth's line smashing brought the ball up to the 2 yard mark and then C. D. Bliss went over for the touchdown and kicked the goal. It was Yale, 6; Harvard, 0. And so it remained to the finish.

"Well, for days and days the talk was about nothing but this great momentum play of Deland's," continued Mr. Camp. "Later he devised plays with the flying wedge from scrimmage and they went very effectively through the great work of Waters. The power of the flying wedge was not shot straight ahead. That would have made it comparatively easy to stop.

"But the power always was applied at either side, in a line with the force of one of the sides of the V. You could not meet it by congesting in front of it and you had to guess where it was likely to hit. If you massed to get it at one side the application of the force could be changed so that the wedge struck on the other side. It was a tough play. And it was a spectacular one—particularly that November day in 1892.

"There was no particular defense against the flying wedge for a few seasons, but I finally doped one out," said Mr. Camp. "When I went to Stanford to coach I put four men at one side and four men at another—a flying wedge to meet the flying wedge. Of course, this headon collision of these two wedges was terrific—but it was the only way to stop the momentum play."

The Lineup of Thirty Years Ago.

The lineup of Harvard and Yale in that contest thirty years ago will be of great interest to modern followers of the game—and to the old timers too. It follows:

Yale.	Positions.	Harvard.
Hinkey	Left end	Emmons
Winter	Left tackle	Upton
McCrea	Left guard	Waters
Stillman	Center	Lewis
Hickok	Right guard	Mackie
Wallis	Right tackle	Newell
Greenway	Right end	Hallowell
McCormick	Quarterback	Trafford
L. Bliss	Left halfback	Gray
C. D. Bliss	Right halfback	Lake
Butterworth	Fullback	Brewer

Hinkey, Wallis, Waters, Lewis, Newell, Hallowell, McCormick and Brewer were All Americans that year, along with Wheeler and King of Princeton and Thayer of Pennsylvania. Butterworth's poor work against Harvard lost him a place on the team, but he made it in 1893 and 1894. Vance McCormick will be remembered as the chairman of the National Democratic Committee which helped to reelect President Wilson. Hinkey will be remembered as the Living Flame—one of the greatest players of all time.

According to Mr. Camp, Deland, who, by the way, was the husband of Margaret Deland the novelist, was a great believer in psychology. "I remember a striking incident which demonstrated his belief in psychology, particularly in advertising," declared Mr. Camp. "There were two shoe shining 'parlors' at a busy corner in Boston. It was a Saturday afternoon. Deland went to the owner of one of these places and said, 'I will show you a way to fill all your chairs and get all the customers while the other man gets practically none. All you have to do is to shout, "Get your Sunday shine!" Don't forget to yell Sunday in there.'

"Well, the bootblack went out and yelled as he had been instructed. The place soon became jammed and folks were waiting, while the rival place had practically nobody in it. Deland was a great mind for digging out things like that."

Deland not only invented football plays but football paraphernalia as well. He brought out the leather jacket at Harvard. The jacket was polished so that it was smooth and slippery. This was an adaptation of the canvas jacket brought out by Trinity against Yale some years before. It is said that Deland also invented the system of putting leather patches on the jerseys to disguise the ball, the kind which were dug up again by Percy Haughton. However, Mr. Camp says he saw those in the West before they were used in the East.

There have been many great football coaches who were not great players. There have been many great football inventions, many startling games. But no man who never had played football rose to the zenith of coaching as did Deland. No play startled as did his flying wedge. And no one game in football history stands out as does the battle which was fought at Springfield on November 19, 1892.

Songs of the Gridiron

GOAL LINES. By Frank D. Halsey and A. C. M. Azoy, Jr., Princeton University Press.

IN spirit and appearance, somewhat recalling McCready Sykes's "The Chronicles of the Elis" of almost twenty years ago, is "Goal Lines: an Anthology of Princeton Verse, Athletically Inclined." Both books were designed whimsically to exploit Princeton's achievements on the gridiron, and "Goal Lines" has been so brought down to the thrill of the hour that one poem, "Go West, Young Man," narrates the events that took place on Stagg Field, Chicago, on October 28 of the present year. It is merely comparative disparagement to say that the younger book lacks the quality of its senior, for "The Chronicles of the Elis" was not only unusual but really brilliant writing.

A characteristic bit of "Goal Lines" is "Yale Vitamines," suggested by the widely copied headline from a New York newspaper of a year and a half ago: "Chemist Contends Connecticut's Exhausted Productivity of Soil Lowers Vitality of Yale Athletes." "Yale Vitamines" runs:

When Fido Kempton hits the sod,
For Yale, for country and for God,
Blame not the strength of Princeton's line—
Look to the watery vitamine.

List to the good professor tell
How came it that the Eli shell
Lagged far behind the Harvard eight—
That, too, was something that they ate.

If Yale teams are no longer there,
And seem, like Samson, shorn of hair,
Remember, please, what makes it hurt—
It is the soil that does them dirt.

The soil of proud Connecticut
They say is now exhausted, but
If that be true, then is it just
To make Yale athletes bite the dust?
The more of that they eat, you see,
The less athletic they will be.
Ah, sad to see old Yale decline!
Oh, vanished, vital vitamine!

The way out of this dreadful mess
Is difficult, we must confess;
But here's a way it might be done:
For head coach, Peter Henderson.

Humanized Sociology

OUR NEIGHBORS. By Anne Marion MacLean. The Macmillan Company.

MISS MACLEAN is not quite another Jacob Riis, but she is an own sister in sociology to him; a feminine counterpart, somewhat more sentimental and therefore with less balanced judgment. But her vividly drawn little pictures of how the "other three-quarters" lives have a certain validity. They are sketches of the tragedy and pathos, and now and then of the humors, of the sordid, struggling lives of the very poor, or of those who live precariously on the edge of poverty. Inevitably most of the chapters deal with the foreign born, the recent immigrant and the children of the immigrant. Her approach is always from the human side; she sees, and makes her reader see, the tragedy of incompetence, stupidity, and what may best be called out-of-placeness as well as the more familiar tragedies of injustice, exploitation and hard commercialism. She is of the school that believes the "frustrate and unfit" can be lifted up, chiefly by the practice of a sublimated neighborliness—in other words what is traditionally known as Christian charity and brotherhood. It is a moving book, although the scientific economist may balk at some of its doctrines.

Georges Clemenceau's "Au Pied du Sinai" has been translated by Amelia V. Ende and will soon be published by the Bernard G. Richards Company.